From Xeno-Impunity or Alien Impunity to Inverted Imputation

On Origin, Impunity, and the Reversal of Blame in the Post-National State

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1. Introduction

For some time now, one of the broader themes I have been concerned with is what may be called the xenophilic drift of Western societies. This drift contrasts sharply with the ordinary xenophobia that has existed in virtually every age and civilization. Traditional societies tended to fear, mistrust, exclude, or subordinate the stranger. Contemporary Western societies, by contrast, increasingly display the opposite pathology: not mere hospitality toward the foreigner, but a kind of moral overvaluation of foreignness itself, an institutional and symbolic preference for the alien, the external, the migrant, the minoritarian, or the culturally other.

One element of this xenophilic drift is impunity by reason of origin: what I call xeno-impunity, or alien impunity. In such cases, foreignness does not merely describe a subject's background; it becomes an informal shield, a source of caution, inhibition, denial, paternalism, or narrative protection. But the purpose of this paper is to contrast xeno-impunity with an even more extreme and unprecedented variant: inverted or reverse imputation. This second phenomenon implies sociological and political changes that would have seemed almost unthinkable not long ago. It is no longer merely that the offender may be treated with indulgence because of origin; it is that the victim, the native, or the witness may be treated as the suspicious party because he threatens the narrative that protects the offender.

One of the most disturbing mutations of the contemporary State is not simply that some crimes go unpunished. Impunity itself is ancient: there is impunity through power, money, family networks, administrative incompetence, judicial overload, or simple institutional cowardice. The new phenomenon is stranger: impunity no longer appears merely as the absence of punishment, but as an inversion of imputation.

That is to say: the system not only fails to impute responsibility correctly to the offender; it begins to impute, symbolically, politically, police-wise, or legally, the victim, the witness, or the person who verbalizes the politically uncomfortable pattern of the crime.

This text proposes two main notions: xeno-impunity or alien impunity, on the one hand, and inverted imputation or reverse imputation, on the other. The first concept, xeno-impunity, preserves the neological force of the term. The second, alien impunity, is more direct and more easily intelligible in English, because it points to an impunity linked to external origin, foreignness, or protected alterity.

Xeno-impunity or alien impunity designates an impunity produced, facilitated, or tolerated by reason of external origin, foreignness, cultural alterity, or belonging to a politically protected category. It is not necessarily an impunity written into the law. It is a social, police, administrative, judicial, or media impunity. Origin does not formally act as an exemption, but it may informally act as an element of caution, excuse, inhibition, concealment, or taboo.

Inverted imputation, by contrast, designates the higher process by which suspicion begins to shift away from the offender and toward the victim, the native, or the person who denounces the pattern. The result of this inverted imputation is reverse imputation: the moment when the victim, the witness, or the citizen who points out the problem ends up occupying the functional, symbolic, police, or even legal position of the guilty party.

In other words: xeno-impunity is the first scandal; inverted imputation is the mechanism of displacement; reverse imputation is the final result. First, the system stops looking fully at the offender. Then it begins to look suspiciously at whoever reacts against him. Finally, the victim may end up being treated as the main problem.

The thesis is harsh, but it must be formulated precisely. It is not a question of saying that all foreigners enjoy impunity, nor that every crime committed by a foreigner receives privileged treatment. That would be false and unjust. What is being denounced is a selective institutional mechanism by which, in certain Western societies, the offender's origin may become an element of discursive, police, or judicial shielding.

Origin, which should be legally irrelevant except where it is objectively relevant — for example, in matters of deportation, recidivism, transnational networks, asylum policy, public security, or failed integration — ends up

functioning as a taboo. And where there is a taboo, the first suspect is not always the one who breaks it through violence, but the one who names it.

2. What Is Xeno-Impunity or Alien Impunity?

Xeno-impunity or alien impunity is not a legal category. It does not appear in penal codes. It is a political-legal, sociological, and moral category. It designates those cases in which the State, for ideological, administrative, or communicative reasons, treats certain offenders as if their condition of foreignness, uprootedness, marginality, or cultural alterity required special indulgence.

This indulgence may take many forms.

First, it may appear as cultural paternalism. The offender is treated as someone who does not fully "understand" the norms of the host society, as if he were a kind of moral minor, a partially irresponsible subject because he comes from another cultural world. This paternalism is deeply problematic, because it denies the foreigner the full adult responsibility that is demanded of the native. In the name of anti-racism, it may end up producing an inverted form of racism: the assumption that the other cannot be judged with the same degree of exigency because he does not fully belong to our normative universe.

Second, it may appear as fear of social scandal. The State avoids naming, recording, or analyzing the origin of offenders because it fears feeding communal tensions. But this prudence, when it becomes systematic concealment, does not pacify society: it morally destroys it. A society that cannot look facts in the face ends up delegating truth to rumors, social media, resentment, and radicalization.

Third, it may appear as medicalization of crime. Certain attacks are depoliticized or symbolically de-penalized under the category of psychotic episodes, mental breakdown, or incapacity of discernment. Naturally, mental illness exists, and the rule of law must distinguish between full responsibility, diminished responsibility, and criminal irresponsibility. But the problem appears when society perceives that this clinical explanation operates with special sensitivity in certain profiles, while other profiles are immediately interpreted as hatred, extremism, or structural dangerousness.

Fourth, it may appear as administrative inertia. Offenders with deportation orders, criminal records, irregular administrative status, or prior signs of dangerousness continue to circulate because nobody executes anything, nobody

assumes the political cost, nobody wants to turn a file into a conflict. The State, in such cases, is not compassionate: it is cowardly.

Xeno-impunity or alien impunity, therefore, does not necessarily mean formal acquittal. It may consist in not deporting, not investigating, not recording data, not seeing patterns, not connecting files, not listening to victims, not wanting to know. It is an impunity prior to trial: an impunity of filtering, of looking, of classification.

3. Impunity by Origin as a Compassionate Exception

Xeno-impunity must be named as such precisely because it is not just any impunity. It is not merely that the State fails. It is that it fails in a specific way, for a specific reason, and in a specific direction.

The offender is not partially protected because he is powerful in the classical sense, but because he belongs to a category that the contemporary State does not know how to treat with full equality: the vulnerable foreigner, the irregular migrant, the member of a cultural minority, the subject coming from an environment presumed to be traumatic, poor, discriminated against, or "not integrated."

The consequence is that equality before the law is broken from below: not through aristocratic privilege, but through compassionate exceptionalism. The State does not openly say that this subject bears less responsibility, but it acts as if this were the case. It does not declare it legally, but it practices it administratively. It does not formulate it as doctrine, but it incorporates it as reflex.

This is one of the great paradoxes of xeno-impunity. It presents itself as a form of humanitarianism, but it ends up destroying both justice and the moral dignity of the foreigner himself. To treat someone as less imputable by reason of origin is a form of infantilization. The State implicitly says: "this subject does not know our norms well enough, does not understand our culture well enough, cannot be judged in exactly the same way." But if this is so, then the host society is no longer integrating responsible citizens or residents, but administering anthropological exceptions.

That is why it must be repeated: xeno-impunity or alien impunity is not anti-racism. It is paternalism. And paternalism applied to criminal responsibility is a form of injustice.

There is, however, an additional danger. Xeno-impunity is not only unjust in itself; it is also socially incendiary. By producing the perception that some offenders are protected, excused, or treated with special caution because of origin, the State unintentionally feeds the very racism and ethnic hatred it claims to prevent. A population may tolerate crime, misfortune, and even institutional error for some time; what it cannot tolerate indefinitely is the impression that the law has become asymmetrical, that the victim and the offender are not being measured by the same standard.

This is why xeno-impunity is politically dangerous even from an anti-racist perspective. The more the State suppresses or disguises uncomfortable patterns, the more it creates the conditions for collective resentment. The more it refuses to impute individual offenders correctly, the more it invites the public to generalize blame incorrectly. Injustice generates suspicion; suspicion generates resentment; resentment, when denied and unmanaged, may become ethnic hostility. Thus, the very system that claims to avoid xenophobia may end up manufacturing it through its own xenophilic imbalance.

The point is not that racism or ethnic hatred are justified. They are not. The point is that they become more likely when ordinary citizens conclude that truth is being hidden, victims are being silenced, and origin functions as an informal privilege. A just State prevents hatred not by concealing facts, but by assigning responsibility clearly and individually. Correct imputation is therefore not only a legal necessity; it is also a condition of social peace.

4. From Xeno-Impunity to Inverted Imputation

The passage from xeno-impunity to inverted imputation is not accidental. Xeno-impunity creates the conditions for inverted imputation. First, the system learns not to look too closely at the offender. Then it learns to monitor those who do look at him. Finally, it learns to punish those who verbalize what the system does not want to see.

The sequence is therefore clear. First there is an impunity by reason of origin: origin is not a condemnation, but neither is it neutral; it becomes an informal attenuating factor, a zone of caution, an administrative taboo. Then inverted imputation appears: suspicion shifts from the criminal act toward the social reaction that the act may generate. And finally reverse imputation appears: the victim, or the member of the attacked society, is treated as the main problem.

This is the decisive mutation. In a healthy society, crime generates the imputation of the offender. In a society subjected to xeno-impunity, crime generates inhibition before the offender. But in a society that has already entered into reverse imputation, crime generates the imputation of the victim.

Alien crime → institutional fear → xeno-impunity → suspicion toward native reaction → inverted imputation → reverse imputation.

This formula does not mean that every crime committed by a foreigner follows this path. It means that this path exists as a possible political pattern, and one that is increasingly recognizable in post-national Western societies. Its essential feature is that the system stops asking only "who committed the crime?" and begins to ask "what will happen if people interpret this crime politically?" When this second question precedes the first, justice has already begun to invert itself.

Inverted imputation is therefore a preventive technique of narrative control. It does not necessarily punish the victim yet, but it already monitors him. It already regards him as the possible origin of a later problem. Reverse imputation is the moment when this monitoring becomes action: arrest, fine, accusation, warning, public discrediting, or discursive persecution.

5. The Victim as Narrative Risk

Reverse imputation does not operate only on the strictly legal plane. It also operates on the narrative plane. The victim ceases to be considered simply as someone who has suffered harm and begins to be considered as someone who may cause political harm if he speaks too much, if he generalizes, if he mentions origin, if he links his case to other cases, if he questions migration, police, or judicial policy.

This is the gravest point: the victim ceases to be a person and becomes a narrative risk.

In the classical national State, a crime against a citizen was, at least theoretically, an aggression against public order that the State had to repair. In the post-national State, a crime against a native may become a problem of communicative management. The State no longer asks only how to repair the harm, but how to prevent that harm from being interpreted as the symptom of a political failure.

The victim is then subjected to an additional demand: he must not only prove that he has suffered, but also prove that his suffering will not be used against the

official narrative. He must suffer well. He must suffer without disturbing. He must suffer without drawing political conclusions. He must be a victim, but not a witness. He must be wounded, but not evidence.

This is the deep logic of inverted imputation: the victim is tolerated as long as he remains private; he becomes dangerous when he becomes a public argument.

6. The Primary Crime and the Secondary Crime

Reverse imputation may also be formulated as a substitution between the primary crime and the secondary crime.

The primary crime is the real aggression: the stabbing, the rape, the murder, the robbery, the beating, the harassment, the intimidation. The secondary crime is the social reaction that this aggression may provoke: indignation, protest, anti-immigration discourse, racial tension, politically inconvenient voting, loss of trust in institutions.

The post-national State, instead of concentrating first on the primary crime, often anticipates the secondary crime. And when it anticipates the secondary crime, it begins to look at the victim as a possible incendiary.

This does not mean that the State should not prevent revenge, lynching, unjust generalizations, or collective violence. Of course it should. But the order of priorities is essential. If preventing social reaction comes before recognizing the victim and prosecuting the offender, justice is inverted.

The victim may end up being warned, silenced, arrested, fined, or discredited before the system has drawn all the political consequences of the crime he has suffered. The victim is no longer only a subject of reparation; he is an object of communicative management.

This is the point at which inverted imputation becomes reverse imputation: the system no longer merely fears the victim's narrative, but acts against him because his narrative is perceived as more dangerous than the initial crime.

7. Examples and Patterns: From the Police Case to Discursive Persecution

In recent years, various Western cases have appeared which, to different degrees, illustrate this logic. Some are police cases: a victim is attacked, but the initial police action falls upon the victim because the offender makes an

accusation of racism, or because the scene is automatically read through the prism of a possible hate crime. In such cases, the wounded body of the victim competes with the protected narrative of the offender. And, in the decisive minutes, the narrative may weigh more than the visible wound.

The case of Henry Nowak in Britain is a particularly disturbing illustration. Nowak, an eighteen-year-old student in Southampton, was fatally stabbed by Vickrum Digwa. According to reports and parliamentary discussion of the case, Digwa falsely claimed that Nowak had racially abused him or attacked him in a racist incident. Police initially treated Nowak as a suspect, handcuffed him, and took several minutes to discover the stab wound while he was saying he had been stabbed. Digwa was later convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment, so the case is not an example of final judicial impunity. Its significance lies elsewhere: in the initial inversion of suspicion, where the dying victim was treated as the suspect because the offender's accusation of racism framed the scene.

This situation reveals a deep pathology: institutional fear of the accusation of discrimination may become stronger than the immediate perception of suffered violence. The suspicion of racism may weigh more than blood. The material victim may appear less credible than the symbolically protected offender.

Other cases are discursive. Victims of serious crimes, relatives of victims, journalists, or activists may be sanctioned or prosecuted when, after a crime, they mention the origin of the offenders or link the case to a broader political pattern. Some of these sanctions may be legally justified when the speech falls into direct racial insult or incitement against whole groups. But the problem arises when the boundary between describing a pattern and inciting hatred becomes so narrow that empirical truth becomes unspeakable.

A French example often invoked in this debate is Thaïs d'Escufon. She is a highly politicized figure, associated with the identitarian right, and this context matters. But the case is still relevant to the logic examined here because it shows how a discussion about sexual violence, migration, and origin can rapidly move from the primary crime to the policing of speech about the crime. After remarks on television concerning immigrant men and violence against women — remarks made in the context of a debate about a rape involving an immigrant under an expulsion order, and after d'Escufon herself had previously filed a complaint for sexual assault and sequestration — the French anti-racism authority DILCRAH referred the matter to prosecutors, and she was later reported to have been

convicted for racist insult. One may reject the generalizing form of her statement while still seeing the structural point: the system can become faster and clearer when sanctioning speech about origin than when reassuring the public that the underlying crimes and administrative failures are being confronted without taboo.

There are also cases, such as the German gang-rape case widely discussed in the press, in which public attention focused not only on the original sexual crime but also on the fact that the victim or those reacting to the case could face penalties for insulting or naming the offenders. Such cases become symbols because they appear to reverse the emotional hierarchy of justice: the public perceives that the system has become more sensitive to the dignity of the offender than to the wound of the victim. Whether every detail of that perception is legally exact is less important sociologically than the fact that the perception exists and spreads.

Three things must be distinguished.

One thing is to say: "This crime was committed by this specific person, with this specific origin, and that may be relevant to understanding administrative, asylum-related, police, or statistical failures."

Another thing is to say: "There is a pattern that should be studied with data and without fear, because denying it harms victims and feeds public distrust."

And a third, very different thing, is to say: "All members of this origin are guilty or dangerous."

The first statement is factual. The second is political and legitimate if formulated with data. The third is unjust and collectivist. The problem of sick societies is that they often treat the first two as if they were the third. And when that happens, public discourse is amputated.

This amputation does not protect honest minorities. It harms them. If one cannot speak about the criminals of a group, one ends up suspecting the whole group. Transparency individualizes guilt; taboo collectivizes it underground.

8. Grooming Gangs and the Cost of Taboo

The British case of child sexual exploitation networks shows how fear of appearing racist can turn into institutional negligence. For years, vulnerable victims were ignored or insufficiently protected while authorities avoided confronting certain data concerning origin, community, or criminal pattern. The

result was not a more cohesive society, but a more unjust one: abandoned victims, less prosecuted offenders, and entire communities later subjected to a generalized suspicion that could have been avoided through data, truth, and the individual prosecution of the guilty.

This point is essential: speaking about origin does not amount to condemning a community. Precisely the opposite. When the State records data, investigates patterns, and punishes individuals, it prevents criminal responsibility from dissolving into identity war. Equality before the law does not consist in never seeing origin; it consists in not turning origin into either privilege or automatic condemnation.

Xeno-impunity is born when the State confuses anti-racism with blindness. Inverted imputation is born when the State confuses public order with the repression of the victim who wants to say what he has seen. Reverse imputation appears when that repression is no longer merely preventive, but effective: when the person who denounces the pattern ends up bearing more pressure than the person who produces it.

9. The Native as Ontological Suspect

At bottom, reverse imputation expresses a deeper transformation: the native ceases to be considered the natural holder of political protection and comes to be seen as a possible source of majority danger. In the classical national State, the native citizen was the primary subject of protection. In the post-national State, especially in societies obsessed with their own historical guilt, the native is often interpreted as a potential oppressor even when he is a victim.

This generates a moral asymmetry: the alien offender may be read as the product of social circumstances, trauma, uprootedness, cultural ignorance, or illness; the native who reacts is read as the bearer of aggressive privilege, suspicious resentment, or latent racism. One is contextualized; the other is moralized. One is explained; the other is imputed.

Reverse imputation is possible only because an anthropological inversion of suspicion has already taken place. The native is no longer simply a citizen among citizens. He is read as the potential bearer of historical, colonial, majority, or structural guilt. This means that when he suffers an aggression from an alien subject, his condition as victim is not sufficient to absolve him symbolically. He

must still prove that he will not turn his wound into hatred, that he will not generalize, that he will not draw politically inconvenient consequences.

The alien offender receives context. The native victim receives suspicion. This is the essential difference between xeno-impunity and reverse imputation. In the first, the system adds context to the offender. In the second, it adds suspicion to the victim.

This asymmetry is explosive. A society can tolerate many inequalities before breaking, but it cannot indefinitely tolerate the feeling that its own State applies a compassionate hermeneutic to the violent outsider and a punitive hermeneutic to the wounded native.

10. Against the False Alternative: Neither Taboo nor Revenge

However, the critique of xeno-impunity must not degenerate into collective guilt. That is the trap. The post-national State says: “If you speak about origin, you are racist.” The vulgar reactionary replies: “Then let us condemn the entire origin.” Both destroy justice.

The correct answer is a third way: criminal individualization, statistical transparency, and political responsibility.

Criminal individualization means that each person answers for his own acts, not for the acts of his group. Statistical transparency means that the State can and must record patterns when they are relevant to preventing crime. Political responsibility means that if a person should not have been in the country, if he had accumulated criminal records, if he had a deportation order, if he had been identified as dangerous, or if a criminal network operated under the eyes of the administration, someone must answer.

This is not hatred. It is government.

Authentic anti-racism requires treating the foreigner as a responsible adult, not as an anthropological minor. And authentic justice requires treating the native as a possible victim, not as a permanent suspect.

No origin should condemn anyone in advance. But no origin should protect anyone from responsibility when the facts exist.

11. The Moral Formula of Correct Imputation

Correct imputation is one of the foundations of legal civilization. To impute means to attribute responsibility to the person who has performed an action. Without correct imputation there is no law, because law depends on knowing who did what, with what intention, with what responsibility, and with what consequences.

Xeno-impunity weakens correct imputation because it introduces an informal exception by reason of origin. Inverted imputation perverts it because it shifts suspicion toward the person who did not commit the primary crime. And reverse imputation completes this perversion negatively because it turns the victim or witness into the functional recipient of guilt.

The moral formula should be simple:

The offender must be imputed as offender.
The victim must be recognized as victim.
The witness must be allowed to say what he has seen.
Origin must serve neither to condemn innocently nor to acquit culpably.

This formula is elementary, but today it becomes revolutionary again because it contradicts two opposite temptations: the progressive temptation never to see origin, even when it is relevant, and the reactionary temptation to see only origin, even when it erases the concrete person.

Justice consists neither in blindness nor in obsession. It consists in correct imputation.

12. Conclusion: Restoring the Order of Guilt

A just society is not one that never makes mistakes. It is one that knows which mistake is worse. And the worse mistake is to invert the moral order: to protect the narrative before the victim, to protect the reputation of the system before the truth, to protect fictitious cohesion before real security.

Xeno-impunity or alien impunity is already a degradation of the rule of law, because it turns origin into an informal attenuating factor. But inverted imputation is a higher degradation, because it turns the victim's reaction into an object of suspicion. And reverse imputation is the final degradation, because it turns the victim into a suspect, a problem, or a functional culprit.

Where this happens, the State ceases to be an arbiter and becomes a party: a party against reality, a party against those who speak it, a party against those who suffer it.

The way out is not hatred. The way out is exactly the opposite: restoring individual responsibility, equality before the law, transparency of data, and the absolute priority of the real victim over the administrative narrative. No origin should condemn anyone in advance. But no origin should serve to suspend responsibility, silence victims, or invert guilt.

That is why the distinction must be insisted upon. Xeno-impunity is the first scandal: the offender's origin operates as an informal mechanism of protection, attenuation, or inhibition. Inverted imputation is the second scandal: the system begins to see the victim's reaction as a political danger. And reverse imputation is the final scandal: the victim ends up occupying the functional place of the guilty party.

A society can still correct an impunity if it preserves the meaning of the victim. But when it enters into reverse imputation, it is no longer only the penal system that fails: the moral order fails. The victim ceases to be the center of reparation and becomes a threat to the narrative. The State no longer protects first the wounded person, but the story that avoids explaining why he was wounded.

The principle should be simple: same crime, same response; same risk, same prevention; same victim, same protection. And, above all, no society can morally survive if the citizen comes to believe that, in the event of being attacked, he will have to fear not only the offender, but also the State that comes afterward.

Justice begins when imputation returns to its proper place: the offender imputed as offender, the victim recognized as victim, and origin treated without either privilege or collective condemnation.